Amendments to the Claims

Please amend claim 47 as follows:

1.) (previously presented) A method of determining if an article includes a taggant that comprises coded information, said method comprising the steps of:

a) providing an article;

b) subjecting the reporter element to energy stimulation to determine whether the article incorporates a taggant particle comprising at least one reporter element that emits a spectral signature responsive to energy stimulation;

c) detecting the reporter element's spectral signature response to the stimulation, wherein said spectral signature provides a first code; and

d) if the article incorporates the at least one reporter element, determining if the taggant particle further comprises a second constituent that provides a second code.

2.) (previously presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein the second constituent comprises an encoded particle comprising a sequence of colored layers, wherein the sequence of the colored layers provides the second code.

3.) (previously presented) A method according to claim 2, wherein the at least one reporter element is incorporated into the encoded particle.

4.) (previously presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein the at least one reporter element is incorporated into the second constituent.

5.) (previously presented) A method of marking an article for retrospective identification, comprising the steps of:

a) providing a taggant particle comprising at least one reporter element and an encoded particle, wherein the at least one reporter element is entrained in a layer of a particle comprising a sequence of colored layers, wherein a spectral signature of a reporter element is associated with a first code and the sequence of colored layers is associated with an independent, second code; and

b) attaching the microcoded particle to the article.

6.) (canceled)

7.) (previously presented) A method according to claim 5, further comprising the steps of recording said first and second codes in a database in conjunction with information identifying the article.

8.) (previously presented) A method according to claim 5, further comprising the steps of assigning a unique identifier to the article and attaching said unique identifier to said article.

9.) (original) A method according to claim 8, wherein said unique identifier is a serialized bar code.

10.) (original) A method according to claim 9, wherein said code and said bar code are printed on a label.

11.) (previously presented) A method according to claim 5, wherein a plurality of reporter elements are incorporated into the encoded particle.

12.) (previously presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein said reporter elements comprise two reporter elements having different spectral responses to energy stimulation.

13-14.) (canceled)

15. (previously presented) Method of claim 5 wherein at least two different types of reporter elements are entrained within one layer of the encoded particle.

16. (previously presented) Method of claim 5 wherein one or more different reporter elements are entrained in two or more layers of the encoded particle.

17-19.) (canceled)

20. (previously presented) An identification particle for use in retrospective identification, comprising:

a) an encoded particle comprising a sequence of colored layers; and

b) at least one reporter element entrained in a layer of said encoded particle, wherein a first code is associated with the at least one reporter element and a second code is associated with the sequence of colored layers.

21. (canceled)

22. (previously presented) The identification particle according to claim 20, wherein a reporter element resides in a first surface layer of the encoded particle.

23. (previously presented) The identification particle according to claim 22, wherein a reporter element resides in a second surface layer of the encoded particle.

24. (previously presented) The identification particle according to claim 20, wherein more than one reporter element is entrained in a layer of the encoded particle.

25. (previously presented) The identification particle according to claim 20, wherein one reporter element resides in one layer of the encoded particle, and another reporter element resides in another of the layers of the encoded particle.

26. (previously presented) The identification particle according to claim 20, wherein each layer of the encoded particle contains one reporter element, and each reporter element is distinct from the others in the encoded particle such that each generates a different characteristic spectral response to energy stimulation.

27. (canceled)

28. (previously presented) The identification particle according to claim 20, wherein a layer of said encoded particle contains no reporter element.

29. (previously presented) The identification particle for use in retrospective identification according to claim 20, wherein said reporter element is fluorescent.

30. (previously presented) The identification particle for use in retrospective identification according to claim 20, wherein said reporter element is phosphorescent.

31. (previously presented) The identification particle for use in retrospective identification according to claim 20, wherein said reporter element is upconverting phosphorescent.

32. (previously presented) The identification particle for use in retrospective identification according to claim 20, wherein said reporter element is photochromic.

33. (previously presented) The identification particle for use in retrospective identification according to claim 20, wherein said reporter element is thermochromic.

34. (previously presented) The identification particle for use in retrospective identification according to claim 20, wherein said reporter element is electrochromic.

35. (previously presented) The identification particle for use in retrospective identification according to claim 20, wherein said reporter element is infrared fluorescent.

36. (previously presented) The identification for use in retrospective identification according to claim 20, wherein said reporter element comprises semi-conducting nanocrystals.

37. (previously presented) The identification particle for use in retrospective identification according to claim 20, wherein said reporter element comprises an isotopic isomer.

38. (previously presented) The identification particle for use in retrospective identification according to claim 20, wherein said first code is associated with a detectable mass of a reporter element.

39. (previously presented) The identification particle for use in retrospective identification according to claim 20, further comprising a bar code embossed on a surface layer of the encoded particle.

40. (previously presented) The identification particle for use in retrospective identification according to claim 20, further comprising indicia embossed on a surface layer of the encoded particle.

41. (previously presented) A method of forming an identification particle for use in retrospective identification, comprising the steps of:

a) forming an encoded particle comprising a sequence of colored layers;

b) entraining at least one reporter element in a layer of the encoded particle;

c) associating a first code with the at least one reporter element; and

d) associating a second code with the sequence of colored layers.

42. (previously presented) The method for retrospective identification, according to claim 1, wherein said first code is derived from information indicative of how the intensity of a spectral signature of a reporter element varies with frequency of stimulating energy.

43. (previously presented) The method for retrospective identification, according to claim 1, wherein said first code is derived from information indicative of how the intensity of a spectral signature of a reporter element varies with wavelength of stimulating energy.

44. (previously presented) A method of marking an article for retrospective identification, comprising the step of incorporating a taggant particle into the article, wherein the taggant article comprises (a) at least one reporter element that emits a spectral signature responsive to energy stimulation, wherein said spectral signature provides a first code; and (b) a second constituent that provides a second code.

45. (previously presented) The method of claim 44, wherein the at least one reporter element is incorporated into the second constituent.

46. (previously presented) The method of claim 44, wherein the second constituent comprises an encoded particle comprising a sequence of colored layers, wherein the sequence provides the second code.

47. (currently amended) The method of claim 46, wherein the at least one ~~reported~~reporter element is incorporated into the encoded particle.